

# **STATEWIDE INDEPENDENT LIVING COUNCIL**

## **MEETING MINUTES**

**Doublewood Inn, Fargo, ND**

**Thursday, November 13, 2014**

**Call to Order:** Dennis Lyon called the meeting to order at 1:13 pm.

**Roll Call: Members Present:** Dennis Lyon, Sandra Koffler, Scott Burlingame, Brittany Hogan, Erik Williamson, Rod Gillund, Nate Aalgaard, Peter Yung, Emma Kotzer, Diane Siekaniec, Melvin Erdmann, Jen Schill, Bill Willis and Trevor Vannett.

**Members Absent:** Larry Thiele and Jamie Hall

**Others Present:** Craig Sinclair, P&A and Helen Baumgartner, DSU.

Dennis led a discussion sharing information on the responsibilities and duties of the SILC. He gave the location of the CILs with all the branch offices in each region. He encouraged the SILC members to support the community they live in and be involved in activities in the community that relate to people with disabilities. SILC members were encouraged to provide education and information on the needs of PWD statewide to legislative members in their community.

**Approval of Minutes:** Rod made a motion to approve the August minutes, seconded by Emma. Motion passed.

**Correspondence:** None

**Committee Breakouts:** Committees met for 45 minutes

**Old Business:** Melvin made a motion that the SILC fund two people attending SILC Congress, seconded by Peter. Motion passed. Jen Schill as Vice President and Dennis Lyon will attend the meeting in January.

**SILC Member Recognition:** Diane showed the SILC a sample of two different wooden boxes she has from the gentleman in Mandan who makes them. Trevor made a motion that each member of the SILC who has completed their term on the SILC receive one of these boxes as an honorary gift, seconded by Rod. Motion passed. Dennis and Diane will go to Mandan to take a look at the options available and the cost of each item to determine what would work best for the SILC.

**New Business:**

**Committee Reports: Director's Reports:**

**Options:** The attached report was read by Dennis

**Freedom:** Nate reported they have 3 new staff, who are all doing well. Many people have shown up for the Part D sign up today. There will be another opportunity to sign up for Part D next month. There has been lots of outreach done in the past three months. There have been several informational booths set up for various events. Art of Freedom was a success with 60 artists sharing their art. There was lots of media attention for this event with a very good turnout. Diane will be more involved in Freedom in Action in ND and MN in the future. The MFP Program is very busy. There are two full time staff working in this area. There will also be a social work intern working on MFP next semester. Staff attended the Aging Disability Conference.

**Independence:** Scott reported his staff had a strategic development meeting. They addressed the question of "What if Independence never existed?" From this the next 3 – 5 year strategic plan was set. Independence received a grant which was used to provide voter education to over 300 people. Rhonda, who works with emergency preparedness, attended a training session representing PWD in the community. An exercise for a school shooting was enacted in Drake. There seems to be a lack of accessibility at the school. There will be training on how to make the school accessible. There was a bomb squad emergency preparedness training in Minot. The book club has wrapped up.

Books chosen to be read had a disability theme. The Cooking Club is very popular. Scott was called to attend the city council meeting in September to support the need for a better public busing system in Minot. There was a request for two full time drivers and a full time person in the shop. This meeting resulted in an increase in one full time driver. MFP staff will be spending time in October working in the Bottineau office. Jamie, the youth transition staff person resigned to work for VR in TX. A new transition coordinator has been hired. Scott is still looking for a person to fill one more vacant position. Independence held their first hiring fair. There were 30 booths. About 30 people attended. There were two panel discussions – one on veteran issues and one on the need for housing. PWD and senior citizens are leaving the Williston area due to the cost of living they are not able to afford. Housing is still three years away from being adequate in the area. The Minot IL Fair was held on October 23<sup>rd</sup>. It was the best ever. There were more booths and significantly more people attending than any fair in the past. Scott and Brittany attended the APRIL conference. Scott was elected to his second term on the board, which is a competitive process. Last week the Bottineau Office had an Open House. There were 30 people who attended, one of them being Rep. Bob Nelson. The goal is to open outreach offices in the Dunseith and Rugby areas.

**Dakota:** The attached report was read by Rod.

**External Affairs:** The committee is preparing for the Legislative Session. They are working on PR. There has only been a small number of people who have visited the SILC website – about 40/month. The Directors have visited with the Governor's Office requesting an increase in funding to get each Center to \$650,000. The SILC members were encouraged to take time to testify to the Legislature as they prefer hearing from consumers. P&A is an excellent resource for getting updates on legislation for PWD.

**Governance Committee:** Nate reported that Bill Willis was appointed to the Council in record time. We are now at full membership. Nate went over the list of members whose terms are up for reappointment or whose terms have expired. Nate's term expires in March. Royce has agreed to serve. Melvin, Brittany, Jen, and Dennis all agreed to run for another term. Dennis will call Larry to see if he is interested in running for another term. He will also call Jamie to see what her intentions are as she has missed several meetings. The updated Orientation Handbook was handed out. Nate made a motion to delete pages 24 and 25 as the statement on page 9 covers SILC expense reimbursement and the handbook will not have to be changed every time per diem rates change. The motion was seconded by Scott. Motion passed. The committee is working on their parts of the 704. Nate handed out the Training Needs form for all members to complete so the training needs can be compiled for the 704 report.

### **Friday, November 14, 2014**

**Call to Order:** Dennis Lyon called the meeting to order at 9:00 am.

**Roll Call: Members Present:** Dennis Lyon, Sandra Koffler, Scott Burlingame, Brittany Hogan, Erik Williamson, Rod Gillund, Nate Aalgaard, Peter Yung, Emma Kotzer, Diane Siekaniec, Melvin Erdmann, Jen Schill, and Trevor Vannett.

**Members Absent:** Larry Thiele, Bill Willis and Jamie Hall

**Others Present:** Craig Sinclair, P&A, LaRae Gustafson and Helen Baumgartner, DSU.

**SILC Conference Call Report:** Rod reported the last call discussion was regarding the new WOIA changes.

**SRC Report:** Rod reported the VR Conference in Fargo, held 10/22-24, was a great conference. The SRC is now fully functioning for the first time in two years. Harley Engelman is the chair of the SRC.

**Treasurer's Report:** Melvin reported that the SILC payment for quarterly meetings are the lowest when the meetings are held in Bismarck and the most expensive when held in Fargo. Having tracked that, he still recommends that the meetings be held around the state.

**Speaker:** Melissa Sobolik, Great Plains Food Bank, spoke to the SILC on the services they provide. A brochure was handed out with information on referring Veterans who are not receiving enough food to the Food Bank. Last year 91 Vets applied for this service and she would like to see many more apply. The goal of the Food Bank is to end hunger across the entire state of ND. Twenty seven percent of the food produced in the US is not used. The Food Bank uses this food to prevent it from going into the landfills. Twenty eight out of 52 counties in ND have a food pantry. Some of the barriers identified for people to get the food they need is lack of transportation, they don't get enough food, they are embarrassed to ask for food, the inconvenience of the hours the pantries are open, the location of the pantries, the type of food available for special diets, the paperwork and the need for childcare. Each month, 54 semi loads of food are given out to qualified residents of the state. Each year, 13 million lbs of food is distributed. The mobile food pantries that stop in several cities across the state are the most successful. Backpacks of food are sent home with students each weekend to end hunger for children. There are plans for this program to expand to seniors who get Meals on Wheels during the week, but don't have food for the weekend. The SNAP program gives 60 lbs of food to eligible seniors every other month.

Melissa can be reached at [msobolik@lssnd.org](mailto:msobolik@lssnd.org) – [www.GreatPlainsFoodBank.org](http://www.GreatPlainsFoodBank.org) - 701-232-6219

**Internal Affairs:** Dennis reported that the committee discussed the Open Meeting Law. Craig Sinclair was present and stated he would do some research on it. The committee worked on the 704 report.

**Guest Speaker:** Craig Sinclair from P&A requested input on the systemic barriers to employment. Some of the barriers to employment are homelessness, lack of support from the community, crisis of guardians, etc. P&A is nonpartisan. They develop a legislative grid of each weeks actions and the next weeks activities. Craig agreed to sign anyone up for the legislative grids if they were interested. Craig shared some information on CAP. Because of the lack of time, he would be interested in speaking in the future to the SILC regarding the CAP Program.

**State Plan Grid Update:** The SILC worked together to update the grid for the 704 report. Helen and Dennis will complete the update outside of the meeting as time was running out for the entire SILC to complete the task. At future meetings, this will be a task for each committee during the Committee Breakout Sessions.

**Verbal Membership Survey:** Dennis asked the members if they feel more comfortable being on the SILC given the time they have served. Comments shared were that some feel they have a much better understanding of the operations of the SILC now than when they first started. Having a mentor to help explain things is very helpful. There were feelings of great honor to be appointed by the Governor. Being on the Council has helped get a better understanding of the workings of the CILs so that the information regarding their services can be shared with other VR employees and feel comfortable doing so. Some have a better understanding of who can be referred to the CILs and what services they provide.

**APRIL Conference:** Scott and Brittany reported on the APRIL Conference they attended in October in New Mexico. Brittany thanked the SILC for allowing her the opportunity to attend the conference

and the Youth Transition preconference. Scott shared information from the keynote speaker, Aaron Bishop. The Community of Living Division where the CILs are to be moving to is a new form of Government – only 4 years old. Aging Services is a part of this entity. The lawyers are still working on the CILs move from RSA to ACL. The move is now scheduled for the end of January. Currently there is no physical space to house the staff that will be coming over from RSA to ACL. In order for a person to be eligible for Transition services, they must have an IEP. Transition services are for those who are out of school – graduated, dropped out, etc. Next year the 704 will be shorter and will be dropping the Training Needs Assessment section. Scott was re-elected to the APRIL Board of Directors for another 2 years. WAY TO GO SCOTT!!!

**Next Meeting:** The next meeting is scheduled to be held in Bismarck February 12<sup>th</sup> & 13<sup>th</sup>.

**Adjournment:** Rod made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Meeting adjourned at 12:14 pm.